

*Por la Calle de Alcalá*<sup>1</sup>:  
The Languages Used in Storefront Signs  
along Madrid's Longest Street

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#### INTRODUCTION

Take a trip to almost any city or town in Europe and look at the signs in the airports and train stations, on billboards, storefronts, flyers, and advertisements. In many places, these consist of multiple languages, and in most cases, the language that appears alongside the official language of the country is English. English's function as a lingua franca in the context of ever-increasing globalization has contributed to its presence in the linguistic landscape of the world.

The term *linguistic landscape* (LL), as coined and defined by Rodrigue Landry and Richard Y. Bourhis, is "the language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government buildings to form the linguistic landscape of a given territory, region, or urban agglomeration" (25).

The language used in the LL of a country, region, city, town or neighborhood may be shaped by social, political or economic factors. Beatriz Lado claims that a language's role in society may reflect the ideological conflicts that form part of a country's language policies (135).

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<sup>1</sup> "Por la Calle de Alcalá" is the title of a popular folkloric song in Madrid, which was first released in 1932 and sung by Celia Gámez (Fusi 74).

In bi- or multilingual countries, the importance of a language in a given society is reflected in its presence or absence in public spaces (Shohamy 110). According to Elana Shohamy and Durk Gorter, the study of LL provides “relevant information about societies, vitality and the inter-relationship of groups, especially in linguistic contested regions” (2). Jennifer Leeman and Gabriella Modan propose that “material manifestations of language are an integral part of the urban public sphere” (182). Language plays an important role in the LL of a city. In addition to the official language of a country or region, businesses and companies will exploit those languages that promote commercialism. Therefore, the LL is shaped by a whole host of interested parties, such as developers, business owners, and ethnic, religious, or political alliances (Leeman and Modan 182).

#### STUDIES IN THE LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPE OF EUROPE

Since the turn of the century, Europe has been a gateway to the study of languages used in the LL of public signage.<sup>2</sup> Today, the research on LL extends worldwide, including Asia, Africa and the Americas.<sup>3</sup>

In an early study on LL, Nigel J. Ross analyzed the storefront signs in a non-tourist suburban area in Milan, Italy, and found that on some streets over 50% of these were in English. He attributed this to English being “attractive and fashionable” (31) and “a sign of prestige, style and modernity” (33). He noted that some of the names observed would not be used in native English-speaking countries, e.g. *Blue Days Bar* for a bar or *Funny Bike* for a bike shop, indicating that English’s international role was due to its “appeal of Anglo-American lifestyles, values and cultures” (32-33). However, Ross also considered that English is increasing in its importance as a lingua franca (33).

In a different study, Tom McArthur gathered notes and photographs of storefront signs of one major street in Zurich, Switzerland, and in Uppsala, Sweden. He analyzed multilingualism by categorizing these

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<sup>2</sup> See Jasone Cenoz and Durk Gorter; Paolo Coluzzi, “The Italian Linguistic Landscape”; Slobodanka Dimova; Loulou Edelman; and Melinda Reichelt for additional studies of Europe’s linguistic landscape.

<sup>3</sup> See Rama Kant Agnohotri and Kay McCormick; Robert J. Baumgardner; José Manuel Franco-Rodríguez; Laura MacGregor; and Cecilia Oversdotter Alm for studies in LL around the world.

signs as uni-, bi-, or multilingual. His results demonstrated that in Zurich less than 1% of the signs were unilingual German, while in Uppsala 37% were unilingual Swedish signs. However, in Zurich 35% of all the signs (i.e. uni-, bi-, and multilingual) included German, and in Uppsala 46% included Swedish. The other languages on multilingual signs were French and Italian in both cities, and in Uppsala, there were signs in Turkish/Arabic and Chinese as well (33-43). McArthur suggested the data highlighted three motives for the languages used for street and store signs: “the universal, the translinguistic, and the whimsical” (36). He described the *universal* as bilingual signs with two languages side by side and multilingual signs with key international words as observed in many parts of the world, e.g. *Farb-Copier* (36). The *translinguistic* bilingual and multilingual signs included some grammatical adaptation (i.e. phonological, morphological, various meanings, or others) or the use of a transnational word, e.g. *bar*, (36, 39). Finally, the *whimsical* were defined as humorous phrases, jokes, or social themes, e.g. *FTTarium* (39).

María Schlick modeled her study after McArthur’s, collecting data from storefront signs and their advertisements in a large city and a small provincial town from four different countries: Austria, Great Britain, Italy, and Slovenia. Her results indicated that in Great Britain and Italy the small provincial towns had more unilingual local-language signs than their respective cities; and Slovenia and Austria had as many unilingual local-language signs in their individual cities as they did in their provincial towns. However, Austria did have more bi- and multilingual signs in the provincial town than in the city. She also found that foreign-language shop names usually consisted of one-word signs, and English, which appeared in certain shop-types (e.g. boutiques), was the most used language after the local language (3-17).

Jeffrey L. Griffin’s study focused on English signs in Rome. He collected data from 17 streets or pairs of streets from six sections in the city. As many as 10 photographs with English in different contexts were taken for each area. In comparing the different sections of the city, Griffin found that the English signs observed on businesses had few words; words were repeated and ungrammatical; and as one moved further from the tourist area, there were fewer signs with English (3-8).

In their study in Northern Portugal, Penny Stewart and Richard Fawcett collected 271 photographs of shop signs in commercial areas of six towns. Their results indicated that approximately 10% of the signs were in English, and most of the signs were monolingual Portuguese with

specific English phrases and words repeated in 66% of the signs. The authors indicated that other languages on signs were extremely scarce and that the lack of bilingual Portuguese and Spanish signs due to the towns' proximity to Spain was unexpected (56-58).

In Spain, there are a number of studies, focused primarily on areas of tourism or main city streets in the city centers, that address the coexistence of languages on storefront signs. Carmen Luján García analyzed the English in storefront signs in two main shopping districts of Las Palmas, Canary Islands. Her results showed that unilingual English signs or bilingual Spanish-English signs with words and genitive structures (e.g. *The Monito's*, *Peluquero's* and *Bed's*) from English; that English was used in certain types of shops (e.g. fashion and esthetics); and that there was no preference for British or American English (13-36). Mónica Castillo Lluch and Daniel M. Sáez Rivera focused their study on different areas of Madrid with populations of either tourists or multicultural immigrants to determine whether the LL of these areas would reflect these high levels of immigration as well as tourism and whether English would play an important role in the public space. Their results indicated that there were 35 different languages, with Chinese appearing as the most used language, followed by English. They suggested five reoccurring geographic patterns for LL: (1) on main streets and in commercial areas, Spanish and Western languages were most prominent (especially English) and appeared frequently in store names, movie theatres and other businesses; (2) off the main streets in the smaller coexisting multicultural/ethnic neighborhoods, immigrant languages were used; (3) in progressive isolated neighborhoods, there was a transformation from Spanish/Western LL to one or more multiethnic languages (i.e. Chinese and Latin American variations of Spanish); (4) there was an expansion of ethnic businesses throughout the city; and (5) in areas where immigrant languages were not as noteworthy, there was a sense of acculturation (73-88).

In my 2014 study titled "Linguistic Landscape: English in Spain's Store Fronts," I collected data on storefront signs from different regions of Spain to examine the English and/or Spanish-English signs by observing whether the following played a role in the languages used: (1) larger cities versus smaller towns, (2) the types of shops, and (3) international shops versus Spanish shops (i.e. international, national or local) (Martínez-Gibson 129). My results indicated the following: (1) neither the size and population nor tourist versus non-tourist areas affected the use of English or Spanish-English hybrid signs; (2) interestingly, many of the shops with

English or Spanish-English hybrid signs were Spanish international, national, or local stores; and (3) certain types of shops did provide more examples of English or Spanish-English signs (e.g. beauty salons, clothing stores, bars, and restaurants) (132-142). The results of this study reinforced those of the previous studies (Ross, McArthur, Schlick, Luján García), in which English or bilingual storefront signs appear throughout the world because of its trendiness and also its importance as a lingua franca (67).

The objective of the current study is to explore the languages that appear on storefront signs in a non-tourist sector of Madrid's longest street, the Calle de Alcalá, to determine whether English and/or other languages, in addition to Spanish, play a role in its LL and whether certain shop-types and/or the demographics of the area may influence its linguistic diversity. This study focuses solely on the names of storefront signs; it does not include any advertisements on the windows or doors of the shops because, according to François Bogatto and Christine Hélot, storefront names provide an understanding of the identity of the shop, franchise, or company owners (279); while Gorter emphasizes the role of store names as sociosymbolical importance of the community (8); and they may also provide evidence of the product of the establishment. For the purpose of this study, the following research questions were generated: (1) to what extent is English and/or Spanish-English mixing present on the storefront signs; (2) to what extent are there other languages present; (3) how do specific shop-types play a role in the languages present on the storefront signs; and (4) how do the demographics of the area affect the languages used in the LL? My hypothesis suggests that the LL of this area would not be influenced by English or other languages, being that this is a non-tourist sector of the city and the majority of its population are Spanish natives,<sup>4</sup> followed by inhabitants of different Latin American nationalities.

#### HISTORIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE DISTRICT OF *CIUDAD LINEAL*

The Calle de Alcalá is the longest and one of the oldest and most important streets of Madrid. It begins at the city's center, La Puerta del Sol, and extends northeastward. It was the original road from Madrid to

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<sup>4</sup> According to the February 2011 "Informes Distritales-Ciudad Lineal" from the Dirección General de Inmigración y Cooperación al Desarrollo, Ciudad Lineal's population of foreigners is 17.5%.

Alcalá de Henares, hence its name, and beyond to Spain's northeast region of Aragón. As the city of Madrid expanded its borders, a larger part of this main street was incorporated into the city limits. The extension most recognized is from the center's La Puerta del Sol to the old gateway of the city, La Puerta de Alcalá.

According to Enrique Fidel, the Industrial Revolution forced many inhabitants in Spain to relocate to the cities during the nineteenth century. The increasing population created a series of struggles, such as serious sanitary issues, higher living costs, housing shortages, a scarcity of green space, and an intensifying division between the social classes. Despite these negative aspects of city living, most people still preferred to live in the center of the city rather than on the periphery. Traditionally, cities were organized with the focus around a center. Around the middle to the latter part of the nineteenth century, it was architect Arturo Soria y Mata who set out to find a solution to this ever-growing urbanization and a reorganization of the traditional center. His proposal of a linear model structure for Madrid, for which the district of Ciudad Lineal receives its name, provided the expansion of the city with one main street, which would be the focal point for trade, transportation, and shops. This reconfiguration of the city would provide an opportunity to develop housing with green spaces, light, fresh air, and room for families to have their own individual homes. The closest area with enough space and cheaper land to create such a street was along the northern periphery of the city. Since some of the landowners foresaw this expansion, they began to raise the cost of their land. Soria y Mata's solution to this was to build further out around the perimeter of Madrid and design a trolley system that would connect these areas to the center. The main street of Madrid's fifteenth district, Ciudad Lineal, which carries the architect's name, Calle Arturo Soria, branches off at Calle de Alcalá, which connects it to Madrid's most prominent district, the Barrio de Salamanca, and the center of the city.

According to a 2011 report from the Dirección General de Inmigración y Cooperación al Desarrollo, Ciudad Lineal is the fourth largest district in Madrid with 17.5% registered foreigners; and if we were to include the 6.1% naturalized citizens, it would increase the total to 23.6% (2). The three neighborhoods with the greatest number of immigrants are Quintana with 21.8%, Pueblo Nuevo with 21.5% and Ventas with 20.2% (2).

In addition, the Dirección General de Inmigración y Cooperación al Desarrollo reports that the foreign population of the district of Ciudad

Lineal consists of 20.3% Ecuadorians (one-fourth of these live in the neighborhood of Pueblo Nuevo), 10.5% Rumanians, 9.2% Peruvians, and 7.2% Colombians. The report also mentions that the other nationalities with more than 1,000 inhabitants are from Bolivia, the Dominican Republic, Paraguay, Bulgaria, China, Morocco, Italy and France.<sup>5</sup> In the three neighborhoods of Ciudad Lineal (i.e. Quintana, Pueblo Nuevo and Ventas) more than 55% of the foreigners are Latin American natives (i.e. Ecuador, Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, the Dominican Republic, and Paraguay) (3).

## METHODOLOGY

Similar to previous studies,<sup>6</sup> the current research adapted a traditional quantitative methodology for LL. Gorter distinguishes *top-down* versus *bottom-up* signs, i.e. official government signs versus non-official signs of commercial or private individual businesses, respectively (3). The present article focuses on the bottom-up method of research. It considers the languages used on storefront signs between the 200 and 400 blocks of the Calle de Alcalá. Unlike the section of Alcalá in the center of town, which is more touristic and linguistically diverse, this section of the city, which is mostly residential with establishments for those who live in the vicinity, was selected for this study to observe whether English or other languages would appear on the storefront signs. This non-tourist stretch of the Calle de Alcalá lies within the city's fifteenth district, Ciudad Lineal, and comprises three neighborhoods: Ventas, Quintana, and Pueblo Nuevo.

The 200 block begins in the neighborhood of Ventas immediately following the Arco de Ventas, which is the M-30 highway bridge (on the other side of Madrid's most famous bullfighting ring, Las Ventas), moving northeast away from the center. It continues a long stretch reaching Calle Arturo Soria, which is the 400 block (see Figure 1). This residential area includes schools, apartment complexes, some one-story homes, markets, a mall, some squares with benches and trees, and a cluster of street-level shops beneath high-rise apartment buildings that provided the data for this project.

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<sup>5</sup> The report from the Dirección General de Inmigración y Cooperación al Desarrollo did not provide percentages of populations other than those indicated above.

<sup>6</sup> See Bogatto and Hélot; Cenoz and Gorter; Schlick; and Martínez-Gibson for similar studies with "bottom-up" methodology.

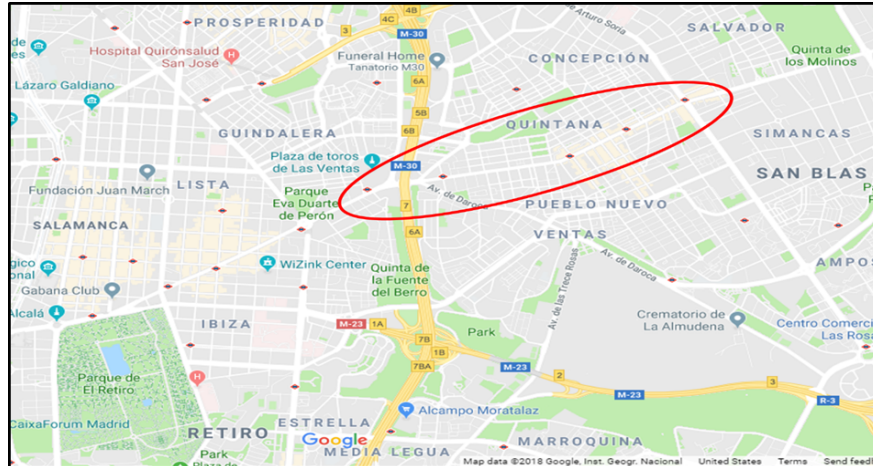


Figure 1. Map of Madrid's *Calle de Alcalá* from *Ventas-Plaza de Toros* to *Calle Arturo Soria*.

The method of data collection consists of both photographic and written records of street-level storefront signs. The written record includes the name, address, and type of shop for all street-level stores between numbers 226 (even numbers 226-406) and 413 (odd numbers 255-413) on the *Calle de Alcalá* to provide a quantitative analysis (similar to the LL methodology of Gorter; Bogatto and Hélot; and Martínez-Gibson) and record of the languages on signs. It should be noted that there were additional businesses located on upper floors of some of the buildings and also in the malls and markets that were not visible from the street. For consistency, only those shops with a ground-level entrance immediately off the street were included in this study. If one of these shops was out of business, but the sign was still present, it was counted in this study. However, if a locale was empty and the sign was no longer present or legible, it was excluded. As I mentioned above, only storefront signs were analyzed for this study to observe the identity of the owners, the sociosymbolic importance to the community, and the type of establishment (Bogatto and Hélot 279; Gorter 8).

Some of the street-level shops had multiple signs with the name of the shop. Most signs were above the doorway that extended the length of the front of the building, sometimes similar to an awning or marquee. Several had additional larger signs immediately above the front of the shop. Others had signs that extended out from the building above the sidewalk for



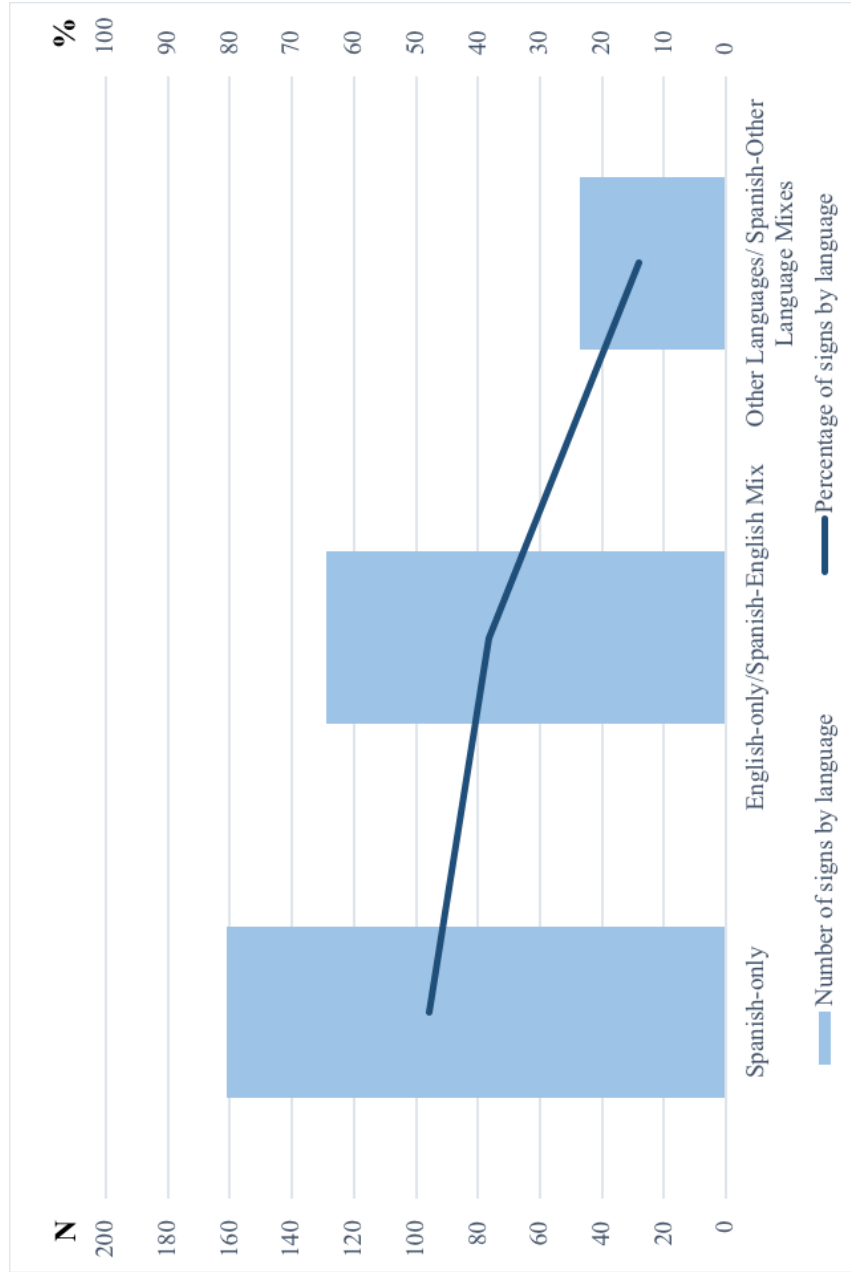
pedestrian visibility. Most corner buildings had signs/marquees that wrapped around the entire shop, many were symmetrical with the one on the front, but some were not. Furthermore, some franchises, such as *Movistar*, had several locations along this strip being photographed. For the purpose of this study, each establishment was considered a unit of analysis, whether there were numerous franchises of the company, various signs for one shop, stores with what might be considered brand names (e.g. *McDonald's*) or shops with proper names. Each unit of analysis was divided into the following categories: Spanish-only lexicon, English-only lexicon, Spanish-English lexicon, other Spanish-English linguistic mixing of the two languages (i.e. morphological, word order, phonological, or orthographical), other languages-only lexicon, and Spanish-other languages lexicon.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Between the 200 and 400 blocks of Madrid's Calle de Alcalá, a total of 337 storefront shops with signs were analyzed. Included in this total were six establishments that were out of business, but the signs were still present at the time of photographing.

Out of all the signs observed, 161 (47.8%) were Spanish-only with no indication of English influence, 47 (14%) included either other languages-only (35/10.4%) or a mix of Spanish and other languages (12/3.6%) and the remaining 129 (38.3%) storefront signs demonstrated some influence of English, i.e. English-only and/or a Spanish-English or English-Spanish mix of lexicon, or other Spanish-English mixes of morphosyntax or orthography and phonetic adaptation of lexicon (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Shop signs by languages.



*To what extent is English and/or Spanish-English mixing present on the storefront signs?*



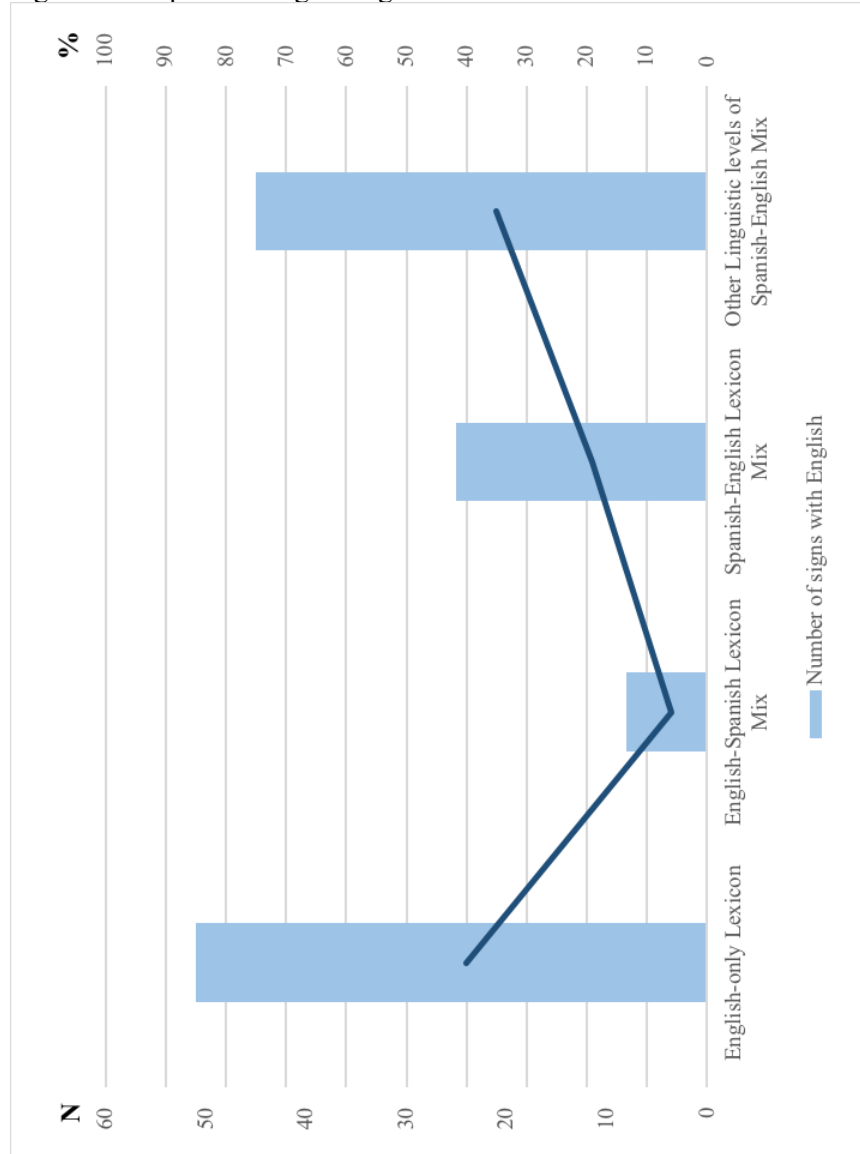
Figure 3. Examples of English-only and Spanish-English storefront signs on Calle de Alcalá.

Among the signs observed, 51 (15%) were English-only, while 25 (7.4%) were Spanish-English, and 8 (2.4%) were English-Spanish mixing (see Figure 3 for examples of pictures). Spanish-English (e.g. *Calzado City*) versus English-Spanish (e.g. *New Caro*) signs were separated to observe the dominant language, which in this case is Spanish.<sup>7</sup> While the English-only signs appeared in form of lexicon only, the other signs, although exhibiting Spanish-English or English-Spanish mixing, mostly at the level of lexicon, also displayed examples at the levels of morphology, syntax, and phonetics versus orthographic representation (45/13.4%) (see Figure 4).

Nine of the English-only signs were international businesses from native English-speaking countries, such as *McDonald's*, *Burger King* (the fast food chains) or *Claire's* (fashion jewelry and accessories) from the United States and *The Phone House* (a phone store) from the United Kingdom. There were a few English storefront signs from companies of non-English speaking countries (i.e. English as a native language), such as the Dutch company *C&A Kids*. However, what was most interesting was the number of Spanish-based businesses or small local shops (41/80.4%) with English-only signs. Over two-thirds of these (28/68.3%) were clothing/accessories or beauty aid franchises, such as, *Springfield*, *Inside Shoes*, *Lefties* and *Bodybell*, or local shops, such as *Pretty* and *King*. Other types of shops included franchises for electronics/ appliances (e.g. *Altair Solutions Network* and *Home Gallery*), mattresses (e.g. *Bedland*) and a department store (e.g. *Tiger*), and a local toy store (e.g. *Walytoys*).

<sup>7</sup> As many studies (Ben-Rafael et al. 17; Cenoz and Gorter 74) have pointed out, the first language on bilingual signs is the dominant language.

Figure 4. Shops with English signs.



Some examples of lexicon for the Spanish-English and/or English-Spanish signs included: *Perfumerías If*, *Moda Outlet*, *Calzado City*, *Calzados King*, *Blanco Stock*, *Pelastop*, *Rock & Vino* and *New Caro*. Other common phenomena were the use of the ampersand (&) and the abbreviation of *company* (*Co.*) with Spanish lexicon, as observed in *Deka-Pé Sofás-Camas Sofás & Co.* or *M & J Bisutería y Complementos*. Since signs can become costly based on their size or number of letters or words, it is common to prefer abbreviations or symbols. However, in these storefront signs, since the Spanish equivalents occupy an equal amount of spacing for advertising (the conjunction *y* for & and the Spanish abbreviation *S.A.*, i.e. *Sociedad Anónima*, meaning *Co.*), it is unlikely that the use of English versus Spanish makes it more cost-effective, which leaves one considering that perhaps English is used for social rather than economic reasons, as other research has suggested (Coluzzi, “Italian” 118; Kelly-Holmes 76).

In addition to Spanish-English or English-Spanish mixing with lexicon, there were other types of English related influences (45/13.4%) on these signs. Two different phenomena were observed at the level of morphosyntax: one was the use of English morphemes with Spanish lexicon and the other was word order. The particular morpheme noted was the genitive marker {-’s}. This finding is not unique to the current study; the use of the English possessive marker has been documented for years throughout many countries, and has been mentioned in past studies (Martínez-Gibson; McArthur; Ross). In Spanish, possession is commonly expressed with a prepositional phrase, for example, *La Casa de Pepe* for “Pepe’s House.” However, throughout Spain, it is common to see signs with the type of shop and then the name (e.g. *Optica Roma*), which was one of the examples observed for this research. There were two occurrences in the data that warrant discussion. In my earlier study (“Linguistic Landscape”), the different uses of the genitive marker were examined: written both with and without the apostrophe, its random word order and its loss of functional meaning (129). There were similar findings in the current study with this type of language mixing. In the storefront signs *Heladería Tino’s* and *Spejo’s Peluquería*, the use of the {-’s} appears to reflect Helen Kelly-Holmes’s premise that foreign languages in signs tend to exhibit a symbolic value rather than a communicative function (67). To support her hypothesis, the use of the genitive morpheme {-’s} in the signs investigated has demonstrated a flexibility in word order. In English, since {-’s} carries syntactic meaning and function within the

sentence or phrase, the morpheme appears always on the first noun (e.g. *John's Shoe Shop*). In signs such as *Spejo's Peluquería*, the word order shows an accurate use of the morpheme with its meaning and function as it is intended in English. However, in the sign *Heladería Tino's*, the word order is reversed. This word order is evidence to the use of this morpheme as symbolic rather than functional. As mentioned above, in Spanish it is common to see the type of shop followed by the name on signs (i.e. *Peluquería Spejo*), whereas in English the opposite is true (e.g. *Spejo's Beauty Salon*). The following signs seemed to follow English word order with a mixing of language in its lexicon: *Milenium Dental Centro* (instead of *Centro Dental Milenium*), *New Shop Bisutería* (instead of *Bisutería New Shop*), and *Fernández Stylo* (instead of *Stylo Fernández*). The English influences observed with these morphosyntactic variations in Spanish may be the result of a syntactic hybrid mixing of Spanish-English due to English's worldwide increase in public spaces related to economic and cultural globalization (Bolton 30; Graddol 12; Piller 155).

Another type of Spanish-English hybrid observed on signs was the relationship between orthography and phonetics. For example, the Spanish business *Europhil* adapts to English orthography using the letters *ph* for a voiceless labiodental fricative [f]. Although one might say this is true of French as well, it should be noted that this company began as a money exchange house wiring money between Spain and the Philippines, which is most likely the reason for its spelling and English influence. Other signs that have adapted to English orthography included signs with the consonant clusters /sp/ or /st/, such as *Spejo's* and *Stylo's Hombre*, which are Spanish companies. Whereas in Spanish /sp/ and /st/ would have appeared with an epenthetic *e-* (e.g. *Espejos* and *Estilos*).

#### *To what extent are there other languages present?*

There was a total of 47 (14%) storefront signs that included languages other than English. Fourteen (30%) of these were a hybrid mix of Spanish and other languages.

Catalan and Euskera appeared in seven (15%) signs and all of those establishments were banks (e.g. *Bilbao Bizkaia Kutxo Banco*, *Banco Caixa Geral*, and *Kutxabank*). French was the next most visible language appearing on six (13%) of the 47 signs. The types of shops varied from the popular phone store, i.e. *Orange*, to clothing and jewelry/accessories.

What was interesting was that two of these shops were not French companies. For example, the clothing store *Esprit* is an American company and the jewelry/accessories franchise *Bijou Brigitte* is a German company. There were five (11%) additional stores with a hybrid mix of Spanish and French that also varied in shop-types: *Fotoprix* (photo supplies), *Soriano: tu centro de bricolage* (household items and furniture), *La boutique electrónica* (smaller electronic items), *Yves Rocher France Centro de Estética* (perfumes), and *Alain Afflelou Óptico* (eyeglasses and optical services). There was one (2%) clothing store with a hybrid mixed sign of French and Portuguese, *Boutique Nova*. Four (8.5%) clothing store signs were in Italian: *Paparazzi*, *Tutto Tempo*, *Colucci*, and *Oggi*, and another three (6.5%) signs of varying shop-types showed a South American influence: *Ipanema* (a café), *Charanga* (children's clothes) and *Pichincha* (a bank). These last three storefront signs reflect the Latin American population of the area. The word *Ipanema* originates from the old Tupi language spoken in Brazil, meaning "river without fish" ("Etimologías"). However, it is most likely recognized due to the 1960s popular song "The Girl from Ipanema," which also made this region of Rio de Janeiro well known (DeMain). Conversely, the etymology of the word *charanga* has been refuted over the centuries by researchers who have argued its origins to be Andean or African; however, Selva suggested that it was a term that existed in old Castilian Spanish during the Colonial Era (195). Its definition has also varied over the centuries, although its relationship to music was consistent. It was defined early on as a small, poorly constructed guitar-like instrument from the rustic Andean region (Selva 195). According to the *Diccionario de la Real Academia Española*, it is defined as a band that is somewhat humorous or one of wind and percussion instruments. The word *Pichincha* is the name of a province in North-Central Ecuador (Encyclopedia Britannica).

Other clothing stores with signs including other languages were: *Linong* (Asian name for a Spanish franchise), *Stradavarius* (Latin name for a Spanish franchise), *Etam* (Hebrew name for a French franchise), and *Orte* (German franchise). In addition, there were two (4.25%) shops with a mix of Japanese and Spanish (e.g. *Gaibú Fiesta*, formalwear, and *Zhong Zhou Peluquería*, a hair salon); two (4.25%) furniture shops with German and Spanish (e.g. *Mobel 6000. Mobiliario, Decoración e Interiorismo*, a Spanish company); four (8.5%) Middle Eastern-Spanish hybrid signs, three of which are Moroccan (e.g. *Sindibad: Kebab & Café & Té*, which also includes English influence; *Bazar Ceuta*, telephone accessories; and

*Decomisos Bazar Canarias*, electronics shop) and one of which is Indian (*El Dorado Kasino-Bar*). Finally, there was one (2%) Swedish-Spanish mix (e.g. *Lizan*<sup>8</sup> *Alcalá*, a Spanish hair salon franchise).

Although there were fewer shops with languages other than Spanish-only or some influence of English, they were present in this area. The use of the specific foreign languages observed may be attributed to a number of reasons. According to Haarmann, “language is the most immediate element of ethnic identity for ordinary people” (109). Therefore, the language used in storefront signs may represent the country, region, or ethnic background of the franchise, company, or owner (e.g. *Kutxabank*, *Charanga*, *Orte*, or *Bazar Ceuta*). Both Kelly-Holmes (67) and Ingrid Piller (173) suggest language is used more as a status symbol or for issues of prestige, as observed with some of the examples of French and Italian (e.g. *Bijou Brigitte* or *Tutto Tempo*). According to Luanga Adrien Kasanga, “foreign languages may be playing a symbolic role, namely to signal globalisation or multiplex identities” (562).

Another category observed on storefront signs was one that actually included coined names. These were not from any particular language, but rather made-up names for marketing purposes to attract buyers, similar to the American ice cream brand name *Hägen Dazs*. There were seven (15%) shop signs and franchises with creative names. Six of these were from Spanish franchises: *Zara*, *Oysho*, and *Bershka*, three different clothing stores from *Inditex, S.A.*; *Llaollao*, a frozen yogurt franchise; and *Llusy Calzados*, a shoe store. The other one was the French clothing franchise *Pimkie*. Since these names may appear to some as a foreign language, which Stefania Tufi and Robert Blackwood suggest is perceived as “different and therefore better” (204), they are more attractive to the consumer and therefore become more profitable. According to Piller, “language is not used as a means of communication, but rather as a way to appeal to people’s emotions” (173).

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<sup>8</sup> *Lizan* is a Swedish name for a woman, which would be a derivative of Elizabeth: Liza, Liz or Liz Ann, Lisa, etc. (“Nordic”).



*How do specific shop-types play a role in the languages present on the storefront signs?*

As observed above, there was a variety of different shop-types with storefront signs either in Spanish, other languages, or a mix of these. Eleven shop-type categories were defined for this study. Some businesses sold clothing, shoes, handbags, lingerie, jewelry, and sports items, making it difficult to provide more precise classifications for shop-types, therefore the categories are more comprehensively outlined.

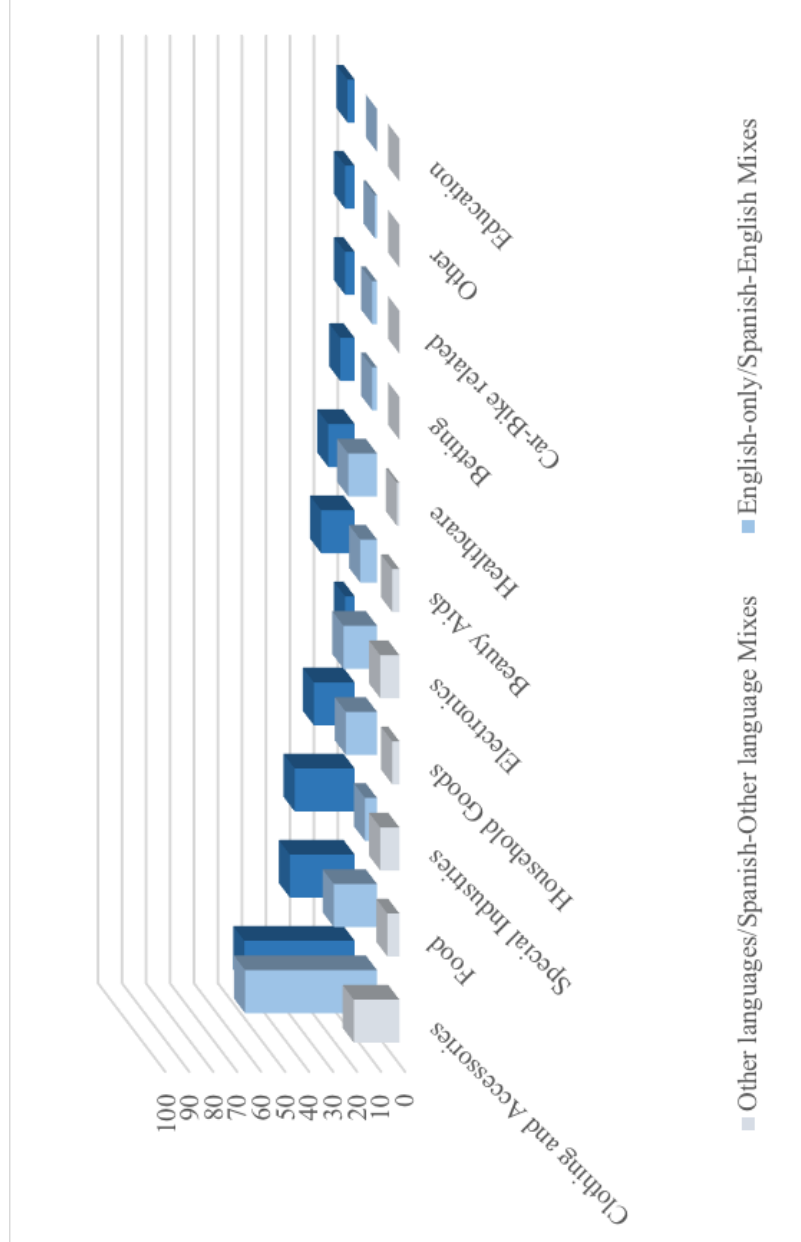
Of the 337 storefront signs observed in this study, the largest number of shops were classified as Clothing and Accessories (120/36%): clothing, accessories, jewelry, and shoes; followed by Food (50/15%): any restaurants, bars/cafés, and supermarkets/grocery stores; Special Industries (38/11%): banks, insurance, utilities, and money grams; Household Goods (33/10%): all household items and furniture; Electronics (26/8%): all electronics, including appliances, computers, and phone services; Beauty Aids (24/7%): cosmetics, soaps, hair/nail salons, and perfumes; Healthcare (24/7%): medical/dental clinics, opticians/audiologists, and pharmacies; Betting (8/2%): betting, gaming, and lottery shops; Car-Bike related (6/2%): both sales and repair shops; Other (5/1.5%): tobacco, hotel, and drycleaner; and Education (3/1%): classes, bookstore, and daycare (see Figure 5).

In three shop-types, English-only/Spanish-English mixing appeared more frequently than the other two groups (Spanish-only and Other languages/Spanish-Other language mixing): Clothing and Accessories (55/46%), Electronics (14/54%), and Healthcare (12/50%) (see Figure 6). It was less frequent than the other groups only with signs for Special Industries (5/13%). In the other categories, it was second in frequency to the Spanish-only signs.



Figure 6. Shop-types.

Figure 5. Number of shop-types by languages.



There were more Spanish-only storefront signs in eight of the eleven classifications of shops, and in the two mentioned above where English-only/Spanish-English mixing appeared more often, the difference was minimal. In Clothing and Accessories, there were 46/38% Spanish-only storefront signs versus 55/46% English-only and/or Spanish-English mixing signs, and in Healthcare, there were 11/46% Spanish-only storefront signs versus 12/50% English-only/Spanish-English mixing signs. What seems to be clear in this district is other languages besides English play a minimal role in storefront signs.

*How do the demographics of the area affect the language used in the LL?*

Based on the demographics mentioned in the 2011 report from the Dirección General de Inmigración y Cooperación al Desarrollo (discussed above), this district was made up of approximately 17.5% foreigners. Of these, many were from different Spanish-speaking countries of South and Central America (Ecuadorians 20.3%, Peruvians 9.2%, Colombians 7.2%, and others from the Dominican Republic, Bolivia, and Paraguay) (3). There were also other nationalities in this district; however, Spanish-speakers, both nationals and immigrants, seemed to make up the larger population. Therefore, the demographics for the district of Ciudad Lineal in Madrid supported the results of this study, showing that although there were some shops with storefront signs in other languages that represented the immigrant population, as this study pointed out, there were more Spanish-only storefront signs (161/47.8%), which represented the majority of the district's population. These do not include those storefront signs with a South American influence that were addressed above as other languages.

## CONCLUSION

To conclude, the research questions presented at the beginning of this study will be addressed. First, English-only and/or Spanish-English mixing on storefront signs were apparent in this non-tourist district of the Calle de Alcalá. Although Spanish-only signs were the most abundant (161 out of 337), English-only and Spanish-English mixing (i.e. hybrid) storefront signs were the second most visible (129 out of 337). These

results were similar to Ross's findings in the non-tourist section of Milan, Italy (29-33), and also to Castillo Lluch and Saez Rivera's findings in the LL of Madrid's main street, La Gran Vía, the principal tourist area of the city (82). As Loulou Edelman suggests, the use of foreign languages in advertisement or shop signs may or may not reflect the languages of the speech community (142). Although the population of *Ciudad Lineal* is largely made up of Spanish speakers from Spain and other Spanish-speaking countries, there are foreigners from Morocco, China, Italy, and France, which may account for some of those shops with other languages, perhaps reflecting the identity of the owners. However, English, not reflected in the population of the area, still appeared on the storefront signs, which may be an indication of its global status. Second, the data also revealed some use of other languages or a mix of these with Spanish. This may reflect communities of smaller numbers of immigrants from these different countries, such as China, Morocco, France, and others. According to Eliezer Ben-Rafael and Miriam Ben-Rafael:

globalization means the worldwide expansion of agencies and institutions . . . from technological innovations to entertainment values. Consumption goods, more specially, are of ubiquitous presence in nearly any contemporary central downtown. At the same time this very era of globalization also means unprecedented movements of populations which fuel the demographic expansion of the megapolis and its sociocultural heterogenization. The universalization of Western standards that powerfully forward cultural uniformization takes place conjunctively with the development, in the west, of new cleavages setting culturally contrastive populations face to face. (199)

Third, the data showed that the languages used in storefront signs were related to the type of shop. There were more clothing and accessory storefront signs with English-only and/or Spanish-English mixing than any other shop-type. However, there were almost as many shops of these types with Spanish-only signs. Finally, the results revealed that Spanish-only signs were most prevalent in this section of Madrid's largest street, the Calle de Alcalá, although Castillo Lluch and Saez Rivera found this to be the case on Madrid's main street, La Gran Vía, in the city center as well (82). Although further research is suggested to conclude that the demographics played a role in the languages used in the storefront signs

for the present study, the fact that the population is made up largely of Spanish speakers (i.e. both Spanish natives and Spanish-speakers of Latin America) clearly shows in the language of the storefront signs.

How do we explain the presence of English or other languages in the LL of this non-tourist district of Madrid with a non-native English population and a large Spanish-speaking population? Foreign languages in the LL of any country may serve a multitude of purposes, from economic value due to import/export economic growth and the market (Coluzzi, "Italian" 119), to prestige given to different languages and cultures.<sup>9</sup> As Ross noted in some of the examples he found, such as *Blue Days Bar* or *Funny Bike*, a native speaker of English would never give these names to a bar or a bike shop because of their implied meanings (i.e. the association of alcohol and depression, and a possible meaning of *odd* or *strange* for the word *funny*) (32). He suggests that "English lends an aura of chic prestige" (31). The present study as well as others on LL (Luján García; McArthur; Piller) have provided evidence of the use of foreign languages for symbolic or prestigious reasons rather than meaning. What was interesting from the current research was the number of Spanish companies (115/65.5%) with English-only or Spanish-English storefronts. Because of the expanding use of English in Spain's publicity, according to Miriam Elies, the Real Academia Española is campaigning against unnecessary Anglicisms highlighting the "ridiculous" use of English words for the sake of being trendy (e.g. a perfume named *Swine*) ("La RAE").

Although the current study indicates that in this non-tourist district of Madrid Spanish-only storefront signs are more widespread than other languages, including English, the noteworthy presence of these other languages of international status without a doubt represents the sociocultural and linguistic expansion of globalization.

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<sup>9</sup> See Bogatto and Hélot; Jaworski and Yeung; Kelly-Holmes.

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